



2011 Community Action Plan Report

Executive Summary

Introduction

The 2011 Community Action Plan (CAP) is submitted to the Connecticut Department of Social Services from the Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT) and is required by our Community Service Block Grant funding. The purpose of the annual CAP submission is to document CRT's adherence to the federal requirements regarding program planning. Additionally, the report demonstrates the efforts CRT puts forth to understand the populations and geographic areas it serves. The 40 town congressional designation listed below was the focus of this report.

Hartford County: Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Enfield, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, South Windsor, Suffield, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor and Windsor Locks.

Middlesex County: Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Saybrook, Portland, and Westbrook.

New Haven County: Branford, Guilford, Madison, and North Branford.

Included in the full 2011 CRT CAP Report are the following: a comprehensive community needs assessment, a description of CRT's service delivery system, the identification of service area needs, the coordination of funding, and target outcome measures. Additionally, a full description documenting the incorporation of the Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) into agency practice is described.

Methodology

To ensure a thorough assessment of community need and meet the national report recommendations, CRT obtained data from over 25 local, statewide, and national sources; administered a community-wide needs assessment (N=933); and conducted 30 in-person

interviews with key community leaders, agency directors, and local and state government officials.

Results

The 2011 CAP Report confirmed that Hartford remained the neediest of all CRT service areas, and specific needs are growing in other CRT service towns.

Hartford is the most populated of all the cities and towns served by CRT and a greater proportion of the population, regardless of age, lives in poverty. Hartford’s poverty rate of 32% is nearly four times greater than Connecticut’s rate of 9%. The U.S. Census (2010) estimated that the 2010 population for Hartford was 124,775; an increase of over 3,000 persons compared to the 2009 American Community Survey estimate (U.S. Census 2005-2009). Hartford’s estimated population was nearly twice that of Manchester, the second most populated area served by CRT.

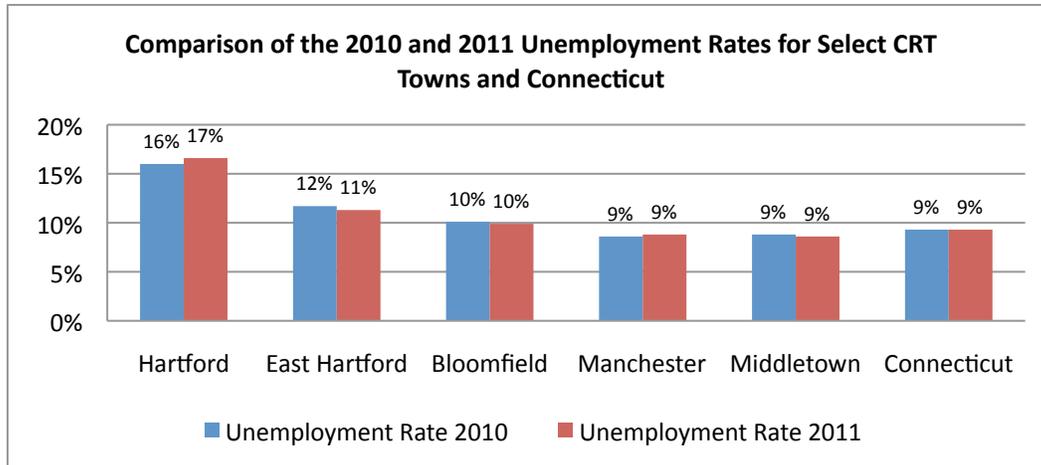
Poverty among children is even more devastating - Nearly, 42.8% of Hartford’s children live in families who live below the Federal Poverty Level compared to 11.7% of all children in Connecticut. Hispanic families are most likely to live in poverty in the larger towns served by CRT. Single parent families headed by females with children less than 18 years of age continued to be disproportionately represented among the poor. In Hartford, 65% of family households are headed by females with no husband present.

Although we observed slight decreases in poverty rates, individual and child, for many of the 40 towns served by CRT compared to the 2010 report, we believe this is related to sampling error in the U.S. Census estimates. The table below compares the percentage of poverty and children in poverty for the six largest CRT service areas and Connecticut

Percentage of Poverty and Children in Poverty for the six largest CRT service areas and Connecticut

| | Hartford | East Hartford | Bloomfield | Manchester | Middletown | Enfield | Connecticut |
|---------------------|----------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|---------|-------------|
| Poverty Rate | 31.6% | 14% | 5.2% | 7.7 % | 11.8% | 6.3 % | 8.7% |
| Children in Poverty | 42.8% | 24% | 1.1% | 11.2% | 13% | 8.5% | 11.7% |

Unemployment remained about the same in most of the 40 towns compared to the 2010 report. The bar graph below compares the 2010 unemployment rates those for 2011 for the five largest CRT service areas and Connecticut.



Housing

- Owner-occupied housing units in Hartford represented 18% of total dwellings, a decrease of 4% compared to the 2010 CAP Report.
- Other communities in CRT’s area have owner occupied dwellings closer to or exceeding the state percentage of 57% (U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2005-2009).
- The number of subsidized housing units in Hartford (N= 17,514) accounts for 34% of Hartford’s total housing units and represents 11.7% of the subsidized housing units in Connecticut.

Youth

- Hartford’s school age population exceeds the other four service areas.
- Hartford experienced the greatest percentage of births to teens less than 18 years of age in the CRT service towns, 6.8%. Data (CT DPH 2008) show that 21.4% of all Hispanic births were to a teen mother, compared to only 3.8% of Whites
- Hartford County’s violent and property crimes indices for juveniles involved with the justice system were greater than Middlesex or New Haven Counties; however, the non-index crime rate was lower. Non-index crimes include forgery, vagrancy, liquor law violations, etc.

Seniors

- Twenty-seven CRT service towns report similar percentages of senior citizens as the county in which the town is located and thirteen have greater percentages than their respective counties.
- Greater percentages of seniors resided in suburban and rural areas compared to more heavily populated areas. Hartford’s percentage of seniors (9%) is less than that of the State and other CRT towns.
- The percentage of Hartford seniors living in poverty (27.1%) is higher compared to the State percentage of 6.1% and the surrounding the towns of Manchester (3.3%), Middletown (8.3%), East Hartford (8.1%), and Bloomfield (5.8%).
- Despite Hartford’s relatively low elderly population, 3,577 grandparents lived with one or more of their own grandchildren (less than 18 years of age) (U.S. Census 2008). Among those grandparents, 54% are the children’s primary caregivers.

Needs

CRT works diligently to identify unmet customer and community needs, and needs vary throughout the towns CRT serves. Unmet service needs and barriers to service were formally identified by a thorough assessment of community need. The assessment consisted of three components - an examination of local, statewide, and national data sources; the distribution of a survey to CRT program participants; and interviews with 33 key community leaders, agency directors, and local and state government officials. Below is a summary of identified service needs from the survey and interviews

Survey Results (N=933)

To better meet life's challenges, overall respondents asked most often for help with energy assistance, food, dental and medical care, prescriptions, employment, clothing and housing.

Interviews (n=33)

The gaps in service identified during the interviews with key community leaders, agency directors, and government officials are summarized below.

Housing

- Extend eviction prevention programs
- Family shelters are needed
- Affordable housing units for low income residents

Children

- Children's mental health, outpatient for kids
- Teenage pregnancy rate in Hartford
- Finding child care for all who qualify
- Child care available at night; care for children at night is unsafe many times

Health

- Access to health care, dental care, and child wellness clinics
- Health insurance for those just over income
- Adult mental health services

Seniors

- On demand transportation for elderly,
- Housing assistance, as population ages
- Senior helpers -- Shoveling and physical strength chores
- More services at Senior Centers - taxes, energy, etc.
- Affordable Assisted Living for Seniors - some exists, but it is not affordable
- Flexible and reliable transportation – elderly, disabled, living alone

Employment

- Effective job development
- Jobs for low skilled labor or some unsolicited, basic needs given economy,
- Employment and training programs
- Underemployment
- Entry level jobs

Other

- Financial assistance programs for single males 25-59
- Integration for individuals back into the community from prison - prepare the family

- Improved crisis management - fires, services
- Ethnic focused services-Vietnamese, outreach to recent immigrants

Conclusion

CRT's adeptness when responding to gaps in service continues to be exceptional. Over the next three years, CRT will work to address the formally identified service gaps in the areas of early care and education programs, youth services, employment and job training, housing, access to food, and health care services.